



PALMDALE

a place to call home

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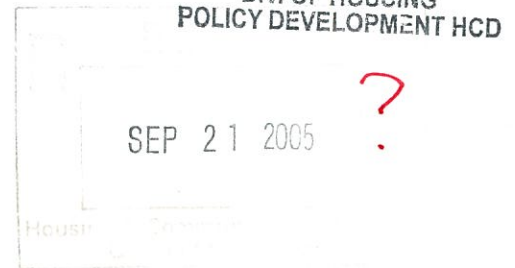
September 14, 2005

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SEP 26 2005

DIV. OF HOUSING
POLICY DEVELOPMENT HCD

Department of Housing
and Community Development
1800 Third Street, Suite 430
P.O. Box 952053
Sacramento, California 94252-2053
Attn: Lucetta Dunn, Director



Re: Annual Report on the City of Palmdale General Plan

Dear Ms. Dunn:

In accordance with Section 65400 of the Government Code, we are enclosing a copy of the City of Palmdale's annual report on the implementation of its General Plan. This report covers the period from July 2004 through June 2005 and was reviewed by the City of Palmdale City Council on September 12, 2005.

If you have any questions, please contact Sharon Kozdrey, Senior Planner, at (661) 267-5294.

Sincerely,

Laurie Lile
Director of Planning



P A L M D A L E

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**2004-2005 Annual Report
On
Implementation
Of the
City of Palmdale General Plan**

**Reviewed on September 12, 2005
By the City Council of the
City of Palmdale**

Introduction

Government Code Section 65400(b)(1) requires that all California cities provide a yearly report on the status of the General Plan and how it is progressing toward implementation of its stated goals.

Accomplishments

New development can be a good measure of the effectiveness of a city's General Plan; therefore, the 2004-2005 annual report to the Governor highlights the development activity the City has experienced over the past year. The report includes a summary of approved entitlements and building permit activity as well as public facility improvements and discusses how the City is doing in terms of meeting its regional housing need allocation.

Between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005, new housing starts totaled 1,748 single-family units, which is an approximate increase of 65% over the prior year's 1,055 units. No new multi-family units were constructed during this period. Thirty commercial and industrial construction permits were issued during this same time period, which is nearly one third more than the 21 such permits issued in FY2003-04. A total of 1,623 miscellaneous construction, plumbing, and electrical, and mechanical permits were approved in FY 2003-2004 by the Building and Safety Department, slightly down from than last year; however, in total approximately \$469 million in construction valuation for all permits was issued in Palmdale during the fiscal year. This is an increase of approximately 75%, or just over \$200 million more than the prior year's total permit valuation.

The Planning Department is responsible for reviewing current development proposals and ensuring consistency with the General Plan. The Department facilitates public hearings held by the Planning Commission twice a month. In addition, the Planning Director acts as Hearing Officer over site plan review hearings. As shown in Table 1, a total of 64 development proposals were approved over the past year, including seven legislative acts such as zone changes, zoning ordinance amendments and general plan amendments. Many of these actions help meet long-term goals as stated in the Land Use, Community Design, Housing, Public Services, Parks, Recreation and Trails and Environmental Resources Elements of the General Plan to accommodate new development that adds value to the community, provides housing opportunities and increases job opportunities for residents.

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Table 1. Approved Development Applications FY 2004-2005

Number and Type of Entitlement	Type of Development or Amendment
12 Conditional Use Permits	Affecting approximately 180 acres of land as follows: 142,000 sq.ft. of commercial and movie theatre use, 300,000 sq. ft. for general hospital use, 100 acres for mining sand and gravel, a telecommunication facility, additional infrastructure facilities and check cashing and payday advance businesses.
17 Tentative Tract Maps	Subdivide a total of over 715 acres of land 1,123 single-family residential lots.
1 Tentative Parcel Map	Subdivide 30+ acres into two parcels.
19 Site Plan Review Cases	Development of 44+ acres as approx. 175,000 sq.ft. commercial, medical office, office and retail spaces and 200+ detached condo units, four off-site model home sales complexes and legalize a church use with the addition of a recreation hall use.
7 Variances	Development standards for specific properties were modified to address reduced lot depth, landscape island width and building height.
2 General Plan Amendments	Land Use Element changes effecting 38+acres as follows: 37.2 acres from RC (Regional Commercial) to OC (Office Commercial) and <1 acre from CC (Community Commercial to CM (Commercial-Manufacturing).
2 Zone Changes	Effecting 38+acres from C-4 (Regional Commercial) to C-2; and <1 acre from C-3 (Medium Commercial) to C-2 (Office Commercial)
1 Zoning Ordinance Amendment	To address the siting of alcohol uses within the City.
1 Planned Development	For mixed use hospital/medical office/senior housing
2 Specific Plan Amendments	Regarding signs and to transfer ten acres from one specific plan to another
Total Projects Approved: 64	

The **Land Use Element** contains a blueprint for long-term growth and development of the City. It also serves as a guide for the day-to-day operational decisions of City staff. In addition to the above-listed entitlements, General Plan Amendments were approved during the year as noted. Amendments such as these keep the General Plan up to date, alleviating the need for wholesale changes to the land use plan under the City's

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current vision for future development. The development applications listed in Table 1 were found to be consistent with the provisions contained in the Land Use Element as well as the land use designation contained in the Land Use Map; therefore, each development project implements this chapter of the General Plan.

The **Circulation Element** addresses the City's plans to upgrade and expand its pedestrian walkways, surface streets, arterial and regional highways, public transportation, rail service and air service. In addition to the projects outlined in the City's Capital Improvement Program, the following has been accomplished in this regard:

- Palmdale Transportation Center. Construction was completed on a new Metrolink commuter train station with bus, vanpool, and park-n-ride services in the vicinity of Sierra Highway and Technology Drive. Cost of the project was in excess of \$8 million. This new rail station provides service between Palmdale and Union Station in Los Angeles as well as serves as a transfer station for Antelope Valley Transit Authority.
- Avenue S Corridor Improvement Project. This \$23 million major widening project for Avenue S will increase two lanes to four lanes between the Antelope Valley Freeway (State Route 14) and 20th Street East. The project, which is nearing completion, includes a Class I bike path, replacement of a railroad overpass with two new bridges, installation of new traffic signals, improved Metrolink rail crossing, relocated water lines, landscaping and drainage improvements. Traffic signal interconnect will continue east to 40th Street East.

The **Public Services Element** presents a plan for ensuring that services and infrastructure will be available to permit orderly growth and promote public health, safety and welfare. All new development is required to provide infrastructure improvements in accordance with adopted City standards. Major public improvements that have taken place over the past year that implement the Public Services Element include the following:

- Palmdale Transportation Center Infrastructure Improvements. In conjunction with the completion of the above-mentioned Metrolink train/AVTA bus station, the project included construction of streets, water, sewer, utilities and landscaping improvements.
- Palmdale Regional Medical Center/Senior Housing Infrastructure. In anticipation of construction of a new hospital in Palmdale, the City is constructing public and utility infrastructure on Palmdale Boulevard and Tierra Subida Avenue, including

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roadway, traffic signals, streetlights, storm drainage, sanitary sewer, water and dry utilities for the project.

- Significant traffic, drainage and roadway maintenance projects have also been completed in this reporting period.

The **Safety Element** of the General Plan presents a plan for minimizing natural and man-made hazards to public health and safety. The **Noise Element** sets guidelines for development in order to prevent noise and land use conflicts.

The **Housing Element** of the General Plan analyzes the community's housing needs and identifies a set of goals, quantified objectives, financial resources as well as a schedule of programs for preserving, improving and developing new housing units. In addition to the number of new housing starts and residential lot subdivisions discussed previously, the City has plans for the following two new senior housing projects:

- Courson Connection Infrastructure and Senior Center. The Community Redevelopment Agency and Southern California Housing have been working to develop land connecting the civic center with the existing Courson Park for future senior citizen housing, a senior center and a park. The Community Redevelopment Agency continues to acquire properties in this regard. Construction of the first phase of housing is expected to begin in early 2006.
- Palmdale Regional Hospital Senior Housing. This senior housing project will complement improvement of the new Palmdale UHS Medical Center planned on Tierra Subida Avenue south of Palmdale Boulevard.

SCAG's Regional Council approved a new housing construction goal of 9,872 units for Palmdale during the planning period 2000-2005¹ under its Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). This housing goal is reflected in the City's General Plan Housing Element, which has been certified by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). The number of housing units identified under the RHNA by income level is shown in Table 2.

¹ The California Department of Housing and Community Development recently extended the planning period to 2006.

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Table 2. Future Housing Needs According to SCAG (2000-2005 RHNA²)

INCOME LEVEL	NUMBER OF UNITS	PERCENT
Very Low (50% or less of median)	1,974	20%
Low (51 to 80% of median)	1,521	15%
Moderate (80% to 120% of median)	2,487	25%
Above Moderate (>120% of median)	3,895	40%
TOTAL	9,878	100%

The City's 2000-2005 Consolidated Plan outlines a variety of efforts to maintain, improve and develop housing. In early 2000, a new 200-unit apartment complex for very low-income households was completed that was financed through state tax credits. A second tax credit project consisting of a 144-unit seniors only apartment complex, including 10% for very low-income households was completed in FY 2000-2001. In FY2002-03, Habitat For Humanity constructed five new housing units that were affordable to very low or low-income families. Table 3 shows a breakdown of new construction housing units since January 1998. To date, the City has achieved approximately 45% of SCAG's total new housing construction goal. If new housing construction continues to increase for the next few years as it has over the past year, the City may achieve 9,878 additional new units; however the target household income levels set forth is SCAG's RHNA allocation will not likely be met.

Table 3. New Housing Units Constructed by Income Level

FISCAL YEAR	VERY LOW INCOME	LOW INCOME	MODERATE INCOME	ABOVE MODERATE INCOME	TOTAL UNITS
January 1998-June 2000	228	116	250	1,248	1,842
FY2000-2001			125	632	757
FY2001-2002			140	636	776
FY2002-2003	3	12	175	898	1,088
FY2003-2004		2	150	903	1,055
FY2004-2005				1,748	1,748
TOTAL:	231	130	840	6,065	7,266

The Housing Element also contains objectives for meeting housing rehabilitation loans, down payment assistance, and loans for first-time homeowners and emergency grants.

² The 2000-2005 Regional Housing Needs Assessment counts all units constructed between January 1998 and June 2006.

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Table 4. Other Housing Objectives by Income Level

TYPE OF OBJECTIVE	VERY, VERY LOW	VERY LOW INCOME	LOW INCOME	MODERATE INCOME	TOTAL
Single Family Rehab Program	1	11**	52	50	114
Mortgage Assistance Loans		11	41	1	53
Mobile Home Grants**	4	28	10		42
Emergency Grants*	21	48			69
TOTAL:	26	98	103	51	278

* This program is only for very low-income households

** These units contain affordability restrictions

The **Parks, Recreation and Trails Element** of the General Plan guides future development of parks, recreational facilities, multi-use trails, bikeways and open space areas for city residents. As the City's population increases, so will the need for active park acreage. During FY2004-05, construction of two community parks consisting of 73 acres neared completion. Funding for these parks include a citywide assessment approved by Palmdale voters, State Prop 40 funds, park development and drainage impact fees and State grant money.

Policies contained in the **Community Design Element** shape the City's overall form and appearance. By continually striving to meet the policies contained in the Element, improvements can be seen throughout the City in its functional and aesthetic quality. Establishing and maintaining high development standards is a significant way in which the Community Design Element can be implemented.

The **Environmental Resources Element** provides a basis to evaluate existing resources and plan for their protection. The Element establishes policies concerning conservation, preservation and managed use of air, water, open space and hillsides, biological ecosystems, and historical and/or energy resources. Implementation of this Element is accomplished primarily through the environmental review process. The City complies with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), including requirements established by the California Department of Fish and Game for all projects.

In FY 2004-05, the City budgeted for preparation of a new Master EIR for its General Plan. The Draft of the MEIR is expected to be available for public review in FY2005-06.

Future Efforts to Implement the General Plan

In the upcoming year, the City of Palmdale will be updating its General Plan Master EIR. As a part of this effort, a report will be generated which will measure the degree to which the current General Plan has been effectively implemented. This report will also identify whether Land Use and/or Circulation Element amendments, or other changes may be necessary in order to address impacts associated with build out of the City. If amendments are warranted, General Plan Amendments will be fully evaluated by staff and scheduled for public hearings before both the Planning Commission and City Council.

Attachment 1: List of General Plan Amendments Approved Since 1993

Element	Amendments
Land Use (21 Amendments)	<p>GPA 93-2 corrected mapping and text errors; GPA 94-2 adopted policies for the development of the College Park Palmdale property; GPA 94-3 clarified policies regarding the location of parks and other public facilities and corrected land use mapping errors; GPA 94-4 revised land uses at 14 locations throughout the City and clarified text regarding mobile home parks; GPA 95-1 modified the land use designation on undeveloped industrial land; GPA 95-2 modified the land use designation on a one-acre property to accommodate a mortuary; GPA 96-1 changed the land use map and text to reflect the Downtown Revitalization Plan; GPA 96-2 added a policy regarding development on the east side and reduced the development density within that area; GPA 96-4 assigned land use designations to most areas which had previously been designated as SD; GPA 97-4A through D modified 15+ acres on Avenue S at 45th Street East from SFR-3 to OC for development of a Kaiser Permanente facility, 28+ acres from DC and CC to PF along both sides of Sierra Highway near Avenue Q-6, and .37 acres on 10th Street East at Avenue Q-10 from MR to PF for a public parking; GPA 98-2 amended policies to accommodate the College Park Palmdale Specific Plan; GPA 98-3 approved land use map and policies consistent with the Avenue S Area Plan and repealed the Palmdale Park South Specific Plan; GPA 98-4 modified 160 acres from Harris Specific Plan to SFR-3 and OC, modified six acres on 5th Street East at Avenue R-5 from MFR to IND and repealed the Rancho Valley Specific Plan; and GPA 99-1 A through M reduced the number of potential new multiple family housing units in the City in response to a moratorium on development of three or more units; GPA 99-2 A & B amended 13+ acres from SFR-3 to CC for development of a 33-acre community retail shopping center at 47th Street East and Avenue S and 83+ acres from BP to IND at the southwest corner of Division Street and Avenue O; GPA 00-02 A through C amended 4.5 acres from OC and CM to PF and .55 acres from SFR-3 to NC to reflect developed conditions; GPA 02-01A&B amended 40 ac. From SFR1 to OS and 33 ac. From SP4 to OS to construct two voter-approved park sites; and GPA 03-02 amended 2.5 acres from OS to RC adjacent to the A.V. Country Club. GPA 03-04A amended 10 acres from NC to SFR-3; GPA 03-04B amended 13.65 acres from RC to CC; GPA 03-07 amended 15.23 acres from SFR-3 to CC, GPA 03-05 amended 37.2 acres from RC (Regional Commercial) to OC (Office Commercial), and GPA 04--03 to amend .76 acres from CC (Community Commercial) to CM (Commercial Manufacturing).</p>
Circulation (4 Amendments)	<p>GPA 93-2 corrected the right-of-way designation for 6th Street East; GPA 94-3 corrected errors on the circulation map; GPA 95-3 updated the circulation map and adopted street cross-sections; and GPA 97-1 changed the designation on certain roadway segments.</p>
Public Services (4 Amendments)	<p>GPA 93-2 eliminated a reference to adoption of the Hazardous Waste Management Plan as an element of the General Plan; GPA 94-3 updated information regarding schools; and GPA 97-3 provided policies regarding telecommunication facilities. GPA 04-05 was an update of the Public Services Element.</p>
Housing (5 Amendments)	<p>GPA 93-2 revised programs which related to transitional housing and emergency shelters; GPA 94-6 updated the status of housing programs and established a "senior housing target area" downtown; GPA 96-3 represented an overall update to the element, updating housing programs and demographic and development statistics; and GPA 00-01, update of the General Plan Housing Element for the planning period 2000-2005. GPA 04-04 minor amendment to the Housing Element.</p>
Safety (2 Amendments)	<p>One Amendment: GPA 93-2 added a policy regarding development near hazardous waste facilities. GPA 04-01 was an update of the Safety Element.</p>
Environmental Resources (3 Amendments)	<p>GPA 93-3 provided clarification for Policy ER6.2.1, which dealt with sand and gravel extraction; and GPA 98-3 amended the list of designated scenic highways to include the Antelope Valley Freeway south of Rayburn Road. GPA 04-01 was an update of the Environmental Resources Element.</p>
Parks, Recreation & Trails - adopted 3/9/94 (2 Amendments)	<p>GPA 96-6 updated the multi-use trail and bikeway plans. GPA 03-06 updated the Parks, Recreation & Trails Element.</p>
Community Design - adopted 12/24/94	<p>GPA 97-2 modified community design policies for industrial development.</p>
Noise (1 Amendment)	<p>GPA 04-04 was an update of the Noise Element.</p>